

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please cancel all pending claims, i.e., claim 1, without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein and please add new claims 2-21 as follows:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

Claim 1 (canceled).

2. (New) The combination of a locking lever and a connector of the type comprising a female housing member and a male housing member, wherein one of the male and female housing members includes studs arranged on two opposite walls, wherein:

the locking lever is a U-shaped member that comprises two flanges and a holding strip portion;

the U-shaped member being mounted in an articulated manner on two corresponding walls of another of the male and female housing members;

each of the two flanges having a cam adapted to cooperate with one of the studs;

the locking lever being movable at least between a rest position in which the cams are positioned away from said studs to allow insertion of the male housing member into the

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female housing member and a locking position in which said studs cooperate with said cams;

one of the male and female housing members to which the locking lever is mounted having an abutment;

a first edge of the holding strip portion being adapted to bear against the abutment;

a second opposite edge of the holding strip portion having a projection adapted to cooperate with a lug of an elastic locking tab;

the holding strip portion comprising, in the vicinity of each of the two flanges, at least one notch of circular arc shape;

each at least one notch being inclined so that an end adjacent to the second opposite edge is lower than an end adjacent to the first edge of the holding strip portion.

3. (New) An electrical connector connecting system comprising:

a connector arrangement comprising a first housing member and a second housing member;

the second housing member comprising studs arranged on two opposite walls;

a locking lever comprising a U-shaped member that includes two flanges and a holding strip portion;

the locking lever being movably mounted to two walls of the first housing member;

each of the two flanges having a cam surface adapted to engage with one of the studs;

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the locking lever being movable at least between a first position wherein the cam surfaces are disengaged from the studs to allow insertion of the first housing member into the second housing member and a locking position in which said studs engage with said cam surfaces;

an abutment;

a first edge of the holding strip portion being adapted to bear against the abutment;

and

a locking arrangement adapted to lock the locking lever in the locking position.

4. (New) The system of claim 3, wherein the holding strip portion comprises, in the vicinity of each of the two flanges, at least one notch of circular arc shape.

5. (New) The system of claim 4, wherein each at least one notch is inclined so that an end adjacent to the second opposite edge is lower than an end adjacent to the first edge of the holding strip portion.

6. (New) The system of claim 3, wherein the locking arrangement comprises a projection arranged on a second opposite edge of the holding strip portion and a cooperating lug.

7. (New) The system of claim 6, wherein the cooperating lug is arranged on an elastic locking tab.

8. (New) The system of claim 3, wherein the first housing member comprises a male housing member.

9. (New) The system of claim 3, wherein the second housing member comprises a female housing member.

10. (New) The system of claim 3, wherein the two opposite walls are parallel to one another.

11. (New) The system of claim 3, wherein each of the studs comprises a head which is at least one of partially circular and partially curved.

12. (New) The system of claim 3, wherein the two flanges are parallel to one another.

13. (New) The system of claim 3, wherein the two walls of the first housing member are parallel to one another.

14. (New) The system of claim 3, wherein each cam surface comprises one of a curved surface and a convex surface.

15. (New) The system of claim 3, wherein the abutment is arranged on the first housing member.

16. (New) The system of claim 3, further comprising a second locking arrangement adapted to lock the locking lever in the first position.

17. (New) The system of claim 16, wherein the second locking arrangement comprises at least one boss arranged on one of the two flanges and at least one recess arranged on one of the first housing member.

18. (New) The system of claim 3, wherein each of the two flanges further comprises an opening adapted to engage with one of the studs.

19. (New) A method of locking together a first housing member and a second housing member using the system of claim 3, the method comprising:

moving the first housing member into engagement with the second housing member;

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pivoting the locking lever towards the locking position whereby each cam surfaces engage with one of the studs; and

locking the locking lever in the locking position with the locking arrangement.

20. (New) A method of locking together a male housing member and a female housing member using the combination of claim 2, the method comprising:

moving the male housing member into engagement with the female housing member;
pivoting the locking lever towards the locking position whereby the cams engage with the studs; and

locking the locking lever in the locking position.

21. (New) A locking lever for a connector arrangement, the locking lever comprising:
a U-shaped member that comprises two flanges and a holding strip portion;
the U-shaped member comprising oppositely arranged openings adapted to receive therein journals, whereby the U-shaped member can be mounted in an articulated manner on said journals;

each of the two flanges having a cam surface adapted to cooperate with studs;
a first edge of the holding strip portion being adapted to bear against an abutment of the connector arrangement;

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a second opposite edge of the holding strip portion having a projection adapted to cooperate with a lug of an elastic locking tab of the connector arrangement;

the holding strip portion comprising, in the vicinity of each of the two flanges, at least one notch of circular arc shape; and

each at least one notch being inclined so that an end adjacent to the second opposite edge is lower than an end adjacent to the first edge of the holding strip portion.